

The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

Continuing The Seminar Quarterly

VOLUME I : No. 3

AUGUST, 1945

*Issued in the Interest of
Christian Worship and Preaching*



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Editor

Published quarterly by

THE COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM AND DEVOTIONAL LIFE
and THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY

of the Congregational Christian Churches

287 Fourth Avenue

New York 10, N. Y.

SINGLE COPIES 15 CENTS. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 50 CENTS per year

Entered as second-class matter March 2, 1945, at the Post Office
at New York, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879

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All contributions (typewritten where possible) should be addressed to the Editor: Dr. G. G. Atkins, Highland Street, North Marshfield, Mass., with stamped envelope for return in case of non-acceptance.

The Minister's Use of His Mind

The Rev. Raymond Calkins, D.D.

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THOU shalt love the Lord, Thy God, with all Thy mind." The words "with thy mind" are our Lord's addition to the summary of the law found in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Jesus seems to say that it is not enough to love the Lord, our God, with all our heart and soul and strength. Something more is needed. It is necessary also to love Him with the mind. Zeal, emotion, passion, these must be restrained and guided by intelligence. Emotion and will, these are indeed component elements in religion. But with these, the mind must have its place.

Dr. Bertrand Russell in his book "Education in the Social Order" has made a criticism of religion that nowhere does it press the intellectual virtues or mental discipline. If he had known his Bible a little better, he could never have made that statement about Bible religion. Had he consulted a Concordance of the Bible, a volume it is fair to assume he did not possess, he could have discovered that the word "understanding" occurs no less than one hundred and forty times in the Bible and that most of the passages concern themselves with its nature and right use. It might have been directed, too, to a benignant saying of St. Paul whom he possibly regards as a psychopathic emotionist, in which the Apostle exhorts his converts to be mature in their intelligence (1 Cor. 14:20—Moffatt); to be capable, that is, of straight thinking, of looking at facts with undistorted vision. T. R. Glover has written that Christianity made its way in that ancient world because the Christians not only out-lived and out-died, but out-thought the pagans. And from that day to this, from Origen to William Temple, the great Christian leaders have not been distinguished by paucity of

brains. The great gains of Christianity in every epoch of its history have resulted from loving God with mind.

Conversely, the great losses which it has sustained have come from zeal without intelligence, religious passion without the guidance and control of the mind. St. Simeon Stylites may have loved the Lord with heart and soul, but his love was not according to knowledge. The Inquisitors who tortured and put to death good and pure men and women may themselves have been good men, yet if their goodness had been matched by intelligence, they would have seen that you cannot execute an idea, nor by fire and sword make all men believe alike. Had religious fervor been guided by the mind, the church would never have excommunicated Galileo or begun the long and futile warfare between science and religion.

I

Today vast damage comes to the cause of religion from the failure of religionists to love the Lord, their God, with their minds. Religion is one of humanity's greatest interests. But, in common with all other of the fundamental interests of mankind, it must be upheld and guided by the intellect. If religion is to maintain itself today, it must have intellectual content and respectability. Precisely that, it seems to many people to lack. One would not need to travel far to find those who think that the more religion a man has, the less of a mind he must have; that the more of a real thinker he is, the less of a religionist he is. The failure of the church to put brains into its teachings has caused a modern intellectual to say that the church has lost all influence over minds that count.

People trained in modern scientific

methods and habits look with ill-disguised suspicion, or even with concealed contempt, upon the easy-going assumptions, the bold and unverified affirmations of the religionist. "In general," it has been said (Robinson, *"The Mind in the Making,"* p. 82), "Those ideas which are still almost universally accepted in regard to man's nature, his proper conduct and his relations to God and his fellows are far more ancient and far less critical than those which have to do with the movement of the stars, the stratification of the rocks and the life of plants and animals." George Eliot in her "Middelmarch" (Vol. 2, p. 328) has written: "Science is probably more scrupulous than dogma. Dogma gives a charter to mistake, but the very breath of science is a contest with mistake." When the intellectual history of this time comes to be written, nothing will stand out more strikingly than the intensity, integrity, patience, thoroughness which scientific men have put into their work. In this sphere of interest the human mind has achieved a new and higher quality, a veracity, a self-detachment and self-abnegating vigor of criticism that compel our admiration.

Precisely this quality must penetrate the religious interest if religion is to command the respect and win the allegiance of thinking men. Every devoutly religious man and woman ought to be able to say with Thomas Huxley that he had never sunk so low as to hold to a belief solely or chiefly because it was in his interest to do so. Religion, it should be remembered both by its advocates and by its critics, has nothing to fear. It can bear the most rigid scrutiny. Jesus took what he had to offer and set it right down in the midst of skeptical school-men, shrewd lawyers and learned philosophers. He did not say "turn the light off." He said turn it on. He did not evade investigation, he sought it. The faith which he offered the world was not one which had to be shielded from searching inquiry, as if, exposed to the light it would

straightway disintegrate. Rather it was like a jewel; the more light that was turned upon it, the more its beauty was revealed. Yet the idea still persists that the religious idea can be accepted only by those who put tradition or the unquestionable consolations of religion above the level of sheer intellectual sincerity. For this the critics of religion are themselves partially responsible. They forget that because religion is the supreme human interest, therefore it demands for its comprehension not one element of personality, the intellect, but the whole person, emotion and will as well. So long as religious reality is declared to be verifiable by the intellect alone, it will be declared to be incapable of proof. The religionist is right when he affirms that an immediate awareness of religious reality and its verification by the process of moral self-surrender are as surely tests of its truth as the method of a purely intellectual analysis.

II

This being said, however, the fact remains that the incredulity of many people with respect to the affirmations of religion is due to what appears to them, and often justifiably, to be the absence of that spirit of self-detachment, veracity, and intellectual thoroughness and sincerity which they find in the realm of scientific inquiry. People have turned their backs upon religion not from selfish motives but because religious truth as it has been presented to them appears to be mentally belated, hopelessly obsolete, without solid intellectual consistency and foundation.

Such a situation calls for a fresh and thorough evaluation upon the part of all preachers and teachers of religion of the word of Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy mind." People must be able to detect within and behind the presentation of religious truth the operation of a sincere, capable and instructed intellect. They must be able to see the working of a mind familiar with the

fundamental ideas on which all modern thinking is ultimately based, with what has been called the geography of man's mind. They must be made aware that there is one who is not merely giving play to his emotions, or seeking to stir up emotional response in others, or simply rehearsing traditional beliefs and presenting them as truths to be accepted on ecclesiastical or biblical authority, not requiring any other authentication. Rather these self same truths will be presented in the report of the intellectual as well as the spiritual experience of the preacher in thought terms familiar and congenial to the modern mind.

By all of this is not meant, of course, that our preaching is to be so intellectualized that the sermon becomes a kind of philosophical essay. Congregations have been starved by this kind of preaching. The rationalized, modernized theology of so-called liberalism has robbed much preaching of its warm, evangelical and fructifying appeal. It does not speak to the heart. Hungry sheep are not fed with that kind of fodder. The verger of an English college chapel once declared that he had been listening to University sermons for thirty years; and he added, "Yet still believe in God." The pastor of one of our prominent New England churches once said in the course of his sermon: "I shall not be able to quote for some time from Walter Lippmann for he is on vacation." A woman parishioner on hearing this remarked: "I hope it will be a long one. I am hungry for a simple gospel sermon." The preaching of some moderns has become so intellectualized that it has no juice, no passion, no driving power to it. After listening to such preaching, one feels like saying with Ezekiel: "Can these dry bones live?"

III

The most futile kind of sermon, also, is the argumentative type. It is not argument that people most need who, trained in the modern scientific and philosophical

conception of the universe, are questioning the truths of a revealed religion. What they need is to be confronted with spiritual reality. It is not the way to deal with these people to give them argumentative discourses. These will but stimulate their own argumentative dispositions. The only ultimate cure of unbelief is the cure of the nature that harbors it, and for this preaching is needed which will quicken and rouse the dormant spiritual faculties. What these people need is not less intellectualism, but more, much more of spirituality. Confront them with the real thing in religion, let them see that there is such a thing as an immediate, personal, convincing experience of God, and their problem will not be solved, but it will dissolve in the light of this new and illuminating experience of true religion.

In a word, what we need in our preaching is the fine blend of both mind and heart. If the mind is left out, then for multitudes our preaching is in vain. In commenting on the fine passage in Malachi (2:4); "For the priests' lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek instruction at his mouth," George Adam Smith uses these words: "We suffer from . . . a vague religiosity from which the intellect is excluded. . . . Religion needs all the brains we mortals can put into it . . . and it is very much by the Christian ministry's neglect of their intellectual duties that so much irreligion prevails. The consequence is the growing indifference with which large bodies of the Christian ministry are regarded by the thoughtful portions both of our laboring and professional classes. Were the ministers of all our churches to awake to their ideal in this matter, there would surely come a very great revival of religion among us."

The words are not too strong. Some time ago I read this sentence: "Can the modern man over whom the cultural ideas of our age exert a living influence call himself a Christian in the New Testament sense of that term, without self-

deception?" That is an arresting question. It is being asked today by many people brought up in the traditional beliefs of Christianity with which "the cultural ideas of our age" often seem to come in conflict. Such a situation can be met only by the preacher who himself understands the meaning of these "cultural ideas," has himself been influenced by them, and by his own thinking and out of his own experience has come to the discovery that the New Testament conceptions of God and man and their relation to each other alone resolve these ultimate problems to their final conclusion. This is to love God with the mind.

IV

The preaching for which we wait here in America is that which is truly rational in that it is based on the accepted presuppositions of our modern world; and at the same time is truly prophetic and evangelical in that it issues from a heart itself in the grip of the Christian experience of God, which knows how to utter the reality of that experience so that other men may feel it and know it. This is what we find in the best Scotch and English preaching. It is beyond our American preaching at just this point and even Americans admit the disparity. Behind Scotch and British preaching there are generations of inherited aptitude. There is always a background of wide reading, evidenced not by frequent quotations, but by allusion and richness of suggestion and material. There is always also a background of hard thinking. Evidently the mind has been trained in philosophical method and is fully aware of modern scientific attitudes. Yet with all of this, there is also found an evangelical fervor, a spiritual passion, a prophetic mood and purpose which grip the heart and make it feel the full impact of the Christian evangel.

What is needed in our preaching is both intellect and passion, knowledge and prophecy, reason and evangelism. Let a

preacher give evidence today that he is fully aware of and acquainted with the ruling ideas of his day, let him betray in every accent the possession of a disciplined and cultivated mind and at the same time let him declare the respect of his own interior and spiritual experience of God in such fashion that no one can question its reality for him and its validity for others, and he will be presenting religion in the only terms that can satisfy the needs of thoughtful men.

V

Consider some ways in which the mind operates in preaching. In the first place it is seen in conciseness and clarity of statement. The disciplined mind abhors verbiage, loose and irrelevant speech. People accustomed to precise and lucid statement in the secular disciplines are often wearied and oppressed by discursive and diffuse speech from the pulpit. Similarly, with regard to vocabulary; the style is always simple, rugged, homely; never stilted, academic or pretentious.

Again, the preacher who puts his mind at work is never inexact in reference, quotation or allusion. There is nothing slipshod in his work to which the hearer most demanding in his passion for exactness can take exception. He is never embarrassed by receiving a letter reminding him that he has not quoted correctly or asking for the source of a quotation which he is unable to supply. At this point one might paraphrase to some preachers' advantage the words of George Eliot in her "Daniel Deronda" (Vol. 2, pp. 262-265), "My dear sir, you are fluent and voluble, but you have never said to yourself 'I must know this exactly, I must understand this exactly, I must go like a watch, true, true, true.'" Intellectual respectability is indispensable to the preacher in our modern world. He must be a good workman who does not need to be ashamed.

Another use of the mind in preaching

seen in the way in which there is projected at once into the foreground the basic and central idea about which the whole sermon revolves. The mind comes at once to grips with its subject. No hearer but is aware at once what the idea is to which his attention is directed. A justice of the Supreme Court once remarked that he could always tell a good lawyer by the way in which, out of the mass of evidence at his disposal, he at once selected the central, salient point upon which the case really hung. The mind pierced at once through much that was irrelevant to that which was crucial. In the same fashion when the mind operates in preaching, the preacher does not linger long on what may be pertinent or even interesting, but elevates immediately the idea which the sermon re-enforces and illustrates. That idea once stated, it is developed in simple, logical fashion which no one has any difficulty in following and even the most jaded hearer finds his attention held to the end. This is not easy work for the preacher. It is the hard work of the disciplined mind.

The supreme use of the mind by the preacher is seen in his ability to dispossess himself of all inherited and traditional prejudices and to pass in dispassionate view the customs, ideas and practices of the world in which he lives. Here we are reminded of the way in which the mind of Jesus operated. We discover that in nearly every phase of life as he saw and knew it, his clear, critical insight was at work. He applied the rigid and exacting standards of his higher morality to the conventional nationalism of his time; to existing racial antagonisms; to the accepted code of morals, even to the most sacred and sacred religious beliefs and customs. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, but I say unto you." In these words, Jesus is revealed in the role of the critic. His mind pierced like a two-edged sword through all of the conventions, prejudices and injustices of his day. Such an attitude, it needs to be remem-

bered, demands more than moral courage. It demands moral insight. It demands the power to rid oneself of ideas that have acquired an almost sacred sanction and authority. Of this power of critical insight, Jesus is the supreme exemplar. History furnishes us with the names of others, Socrates, Rabelais, Erasmus, Voltaire, Swift and Ruskin, men whose minds were able to get beneath contemporary opinion, to show up the shabbiness and insincerity of the existing order of things, shake people out of their smug complacency and point the way to better things. How much we owe to these great thinkers with their power of detached and critical penetration, every student of social history is well aware.

VI

If the modern preacher is to possess real significance and influence, he must bring the mind to bear with intellectual sincerity upon all of the social and political and religious standards and problems of his time. No man can mean much to our world whose mind is not capable of this high performance. Nothing is clearer than that whatever progress the world has made is due to those who have been able to break through the hard crust of conventional opinion, blaze new paths, announce new and better ideas. The capacity for courageous and independent thinking is imperatively demanded of the modern prophet if he is indeed to be a prophet.

Note, however, that the sphere, in which the mind of Jesus operated, was religious rather than economic or political. Jesus penetrated beneath the external conditions of life and his thought concerned itself with the inner motives, the spiritual principles which determined these conditions: the sanctity of personality; the brotherhood of man; the ideal of service instead of self-gain as the bottom motive of every form of human endeavor. Whatever contravened these principles, Jesus condemned. He did not preach social re-

form or political revolution. He announced principles and then fearlessly brought these principles to bear upon the conditions of contemporary life.

Precisely this will be the method of the preacher today. He will not concern himself primarily with the externals of life, nor espouse any particular theory of economic reform. He will preach religion, but with trenchant mind. The religion that he preaches will be carried to its roots. His preaching will be intensely spiritual, but its spirituality will possess, like that of his Master, a penetrating quality which will expose the shabbiness, the selfishness, the inherent inhumanity of many of the popular ideas and conventions of the day in which he lives. Without taking sides in the current economic or political debates, his mind will elevate the cardinal principles of the religion of Jesus, and then apply these to conditions as they exist. Thus is he delivered from

the dangers both of externalism and of an exclusive individualism in his preaching. Also he is delivered from the imputation of egotistically assuming a knowledge and authority which do not belong to him. It is not his own mind which he is declaring. He has but used his mind to discover what is the mind of Him to Whom alone belong all authority and power.

Over one of the buildings at Cambridge University, England, is this motto: "Cujusque mens, is est quisque." Translate it as you will. It contains a profound truth, a truth which the modern minister may well take to heart. It is the mind, the mind's love of God, which in addition to zeal, emotion, passion with which always it must be linked, gives dignity and significance, lends authority and influence to the work of the preacher in the day in which we live.

The Witness of the Free Churches—

A Paper read before the Winthrop Club in Boston

The Rev. M. R. Boynton, D.D.

The First Church in Newton, Mass.

In his introduction Dr. Boynton traces acutely the history of the various reactions against Democracy in the last twenty-five years and its present critical status. The published portions follow that introduction—[Editor].

IF this analysis be at all correct, then we may expect that the validity of democracy will be one of the great issues before our people in the coming years.

This fact has a peculiar significance for us as Congregationalists. It puts us at the heart and center of the greatest issue of the day and it is to some random observations concerning the witness of the Free Churches that attention is directed.

First of all, there is the historical background. Man has always had a desire

for freedom. It is part of his original equipment. It is instinctive with him. But over against this inherent desire for freedom there has been arrayed the selfishness of man that finds expression in the exploitation of other men; and the necessities of security which, in order to secure survival, demand the surrender of individual freedom. The Old Testament furnishes excellent illustrations of the conflict between inner aspirations and the pressure of outward circumstance. The whole legal code of the Old Testament is basically a witness to the struggle for freedom and the considerable measure which was achieved in protecting the individual from selfish exploitation.

But if some success was achieved in this direction, much less was accomplished

protecting the freedom of the individual from the encroachments that derived from the necessities of security as they were embodied in the state.

When the people came to Samuel and demanded a king, he warned them that what they were really asking for was to be delivered into bondage, but the dangers which threatened them from without were so real that they thought bondage was preferable to destruction.

"But the people refused to hearken unto the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go before us, and fight our battles." Here is the classic example of the human dilemma—the sacrifice of freedom for protection. On the one hand the inherent thirst for liberty and on the other the aversion of war. It is also more than worthy of note that even in this early age of history men had grasped the idea that God and freedom were inevitably joined together.

I

It is highly significant to find that our own historical heritage follows an identical pattern. Our English ancestors first appear upon the scene of history not in Britain but in Schleswick on the continent. There they enjoyed a simple, communal life which had large elements of freedom associated with it. (J. R. Green: *Short History of the English People*) The basis of their society was the free landholder. . . . He was 'the free-necked man' whose long hair floated over a neck that had never been bent to a Lord." Here we have the significance of all those long-haired gentlemen whose portraits have come down to us from the past. The "free man's" long hair finds its last lingering survival in the wigs which English judges still wear.

In 449 B.C., the rulers of Britain invited these Englishmen from Schleswick to come to Britain and assist them in their

fight against the Picts and the Scots. They came with Hengist and Horsa but they did not leave. Instead they established communities and began an unrelenting warfare against the Britons. But even though they were victorious, they paid for it with the price of their freedom. They found that in the face of a strong enemy it was necessary to set up a king who would unify and coordinate the free communities. (*Ibid.*, pp. 49, 50.) Again freedom had been sacrificed for security. War had proved to be the enemy of freedom and much of the subsequent history of the English people has been a struggle to repossess the freedoms which were sacrificed for collective security. Politically a large measure of success has been obtained. Socially there is still a privileged ruling class whose destiny the coming years will vitally affect.

In the development of this freedom religion has played a dominant role. Luther announced the doctrine of "The Freedom of the Christian Man" only to back away from its implications in the face of the Peasants' Revolt. This doctrine was then taken up by the fanatical Ana-Baptists and carried to such extremes that it was largely discredited and became something of which the English were afraid and against which the Establishment steadfastly set its face. It remained for the Brownists and Separatists to take the logical implications of "The Freedom of the Christian Man" and apply them not only to the life of the Church but through the Church to make them operative in society.

We Americans are likely to become so absorbed in our own history that we overlook the part which the Free Churches have played in England. I remember well an impassioned plea by J. D. Jones of Bournemouth that Americans should have consideration for the men who stayed behind and fought the battle of freedom in England, for if England is to be numbered among the great democracies of the world today, a decisive part of this is

due to the witness of the Free Churches. John Bright once said in Parliament (Sylvester Horn: "Free Church History," p. 404): "When I look back to the history of this country and consider its present condition, I must say that all that the people possess of liberty has come not through the portals of the cathedrals and parish churches, but from the conventicles which are despised by the honorable gentlemen opposite."

II

It is common knowledge that the Liberal forces in England in recent years have been out of power and have been succeeded by the Conservative or Tory party. In the last issue of THE CONGREGATIONAL QUARTERLY (March, 1945, p. 135) there are these significant sentences:

"Again, it was no mere accident that this eclipse of Liberalism coincided with the weakening of religion—and particularly the weakening of the Free Churches. Prof. D. W. Brogan significantly linked the two together when he wrote in 'The English People': 'In the generation which has passed since the great Liberal landslide of 1906, one of the greatest changes in the English religious and social landscape has been the decline of non-conformity.' The peculiar values for which the Free Churches (and especially Congregationalism) stood—the sturdy traditions of independency, the insistence on the rights of private judgment and conscience, the rule of democracy in church affairs, the emphasis on the infinite worth of the individual—were in the political field the values of Liberalism."

There is no need to elaborate the historical fact, so often recalled in these days—that democracy as we know it in this country sprang directly out of the life of the churches. John Fiske maintained that the Mayflower Compact was the first political document in the history of the world written from the point of view that "the just rights of government are derived from the consent of the governed."

Others contend that the Mayflower

Compact was in no sense a constitution and that the honor of priority should go to Thomas Hooker, who coined the famous phrase, and Connecticut, which actually adopted a constitution based on this principle. But whichever it is, democracy as we know it sprang out of the life of the Congregational Churches and if today the great struggle which is going on in the world is the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism, it would seem as if Congregationalism still had a witness of supreme importance to offer to the world.

It is, of course, apparent that democracy has spread far beyond its parent organization but the point which I would press is this: that as democracy sprang out of the life of the Congregational Churches, it has developed only where the essential spirit of Congregationalism has prevailed—that Congregationalists out of all proportion to their numbers have played a direct part in this development and that the urgency of the world situation makes our witness more important than ever before.

There is one incident in the history of The First Church in Newton which is most revealing. Massachusetts was founded as a theocracy. Only the members of the churches could vote. Reinhold Niebuhr is authority for the statement that no group has ever voluntarily given up any special privilege which they have enjoyed. Here is the exception. The members of the Church in 1689, meeting as the voters of the town, petitioned the Great and General Court that in the new charter which was then being drafted, the franchise be extended to all those "of an honest conversation and competent estate."

Here was not yet full democracy as we know it but it was a long step toward it and the source of inspiration was the free church.

III

One question that will inevitably come to mind is that if democracy was the insight of the free churches, why did it

me about that Virginia, where the English Establishment prevailed, should have played such an important part in producing the documents upon which our democracy is founded. Prof. Hall has answered this question in his book on the Religious Background of American Culture," in which he points out that the religious life of Virginia was almost identical with the religious life of New England. It is true that the church was the English Establishment but they had no resident bishops and to all intents and purposes lived the life of the Free Churches.

Much the same situation existed fifty years later when under the leadership of Andrew Jackson came the next great surge of democratic influence. This came from the frontier—from beyond the mountains. One of the results of this influence was to remove the property qualification for the franchise which the original states had all kept up until this time. In Massachusetts it merged with other influences and abolished the support of the churches by public taxation.

The religious life on the frontier was mixed. To the north New England influence was strong. By the 1830's Congregationalism, sometimes disguised as Presbyterianism, was established in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and eastern Missouri. South of this country the Baptists and the Methodists held sway. The Baptists, of course, were strong in the Free Church tradition. The Methodists have never been very far from it but in those early days of the circuit rider the Episcopal influence was very weak and, just as with the Episcopalians of Virginia, they lived a free life.

The whole anti-slavery movement was a moral insight that inevitably grew out of the Free Church tradition and which made an invaluable contribution to the development of democracy.

IV

Possibly this is the place to point out that the developments of democracy have

been unexpected. Our fathers did not produce a blueprint perfect in all respects which every one was called upon to accept in its exact form or else be damned. Rather they were the disciples of a spirit which led them on their way and they were confident that more light would break from God's word as they travelled on their pilgrimage. To me this is one of the fascinating and significant features of being a Congregationalist. We do not deal in finalities but in great and confident expectations. Our mission is never done and "the best is yet to be." Incidentally, that phrase came from a great Congregationalist, for both Robert Browning and his wife, Elizabeth Barrett, grew up and remained Congregationalists throughout their lives.

Nor has our witness ceased to have its influence. It is undoubtedly true that for the last generation we have been passing through an age of secularism in which the influence of all churches has been at a discount. But I would remind you that fire which runs underground is the most difficult kind to put out and that it may at any time break out with new vigor and power.

Part of this period of eclipse has been due to the necessity of religion's adapting itself to the new world of science. So many times in this war a period of rapid advance has been followed by a period of apparent inaction, but in that time of apparent inaction reorganization has been taking place which has made possible the next period of advance. Religion has had to reorganize itself and none have done this more effectually than the Congregationalists. We are ready for what may come.

Nor has this time of apparent inaction been entirely devoid of significance. The social thinking of Congregationalists has played a most influential part in the economic adjustments which have taken place and which have been the notable democratic development of our day.

Our missionary enterprise has been outstanding. Ridiculed and misinterpreted,

it has taken the tragedy of a world war to awaken the comprehension of many to the inevitable part which it must play in the creating of a world community. And in the quality, if not in the quantity of work done, the Congregationalists have borne a noble witness which today is of tremendous significance in the creating of a new world order. They have pioneered in the advance area into which the democratic spirit is moving.

V

But what of the present and the future?

The first thing that should be said is that Congregationalism because of its peculiar genius and spirit has a special destiny to permeate alien and even hostile institutions with its spirit of democracy. An outstanding example of this will be found in relationship to the Roman Catholic Church. This Church is authoritarian through and through. Its whole philosophy of life is alien and hostile to the democratic tradition. It has repeatedly denounced it and protested against it and yet who is there who can affirm but that the great bulk of its people are sincerely devoted to the democratic ideal?

A spirit has permeated deeply among them which has forced the church to cover up its true position in order to hold its people.

There is every evidence that especially here in Massachusetts one of the great responsibilities of the Congregational Churches is to bear such a strong witness to democracy that it shall continue to permeate the Catholic laity and make it impossible for the church to assert its basic position. It does not need to be pointed out that to do this requires an irenic rather than a pugnacious spirit. The permeating spirit of democracy has been abundantly in evidence in the past—it is the hope of the future and there is no agency that bears a greater responsibility or has a greater opportunity than the Congregational Churches.

Take the spirit of the Congregational Churches out of America today and you

would remove the greatest hope of American democracy in the future.

Second, Congregationalism has made and is especially equipped to make decisive contributions to the race problem, which after the war is not only going to be a major problem in this country but throughout the world. I doubt if any more effective contribution has been made to the race problem in this country than has been made by the A. M. A. Colleges. Because of the leadership which we have produced and our special conviction regarding the freedom of the Christian man we are in a position to bear a distinctive witness in this troubled and dangerous field.

Third, it will be remembered that both the children of Israel and the English were led by the pressures of war to exchange freedom for security. There is no question but that now this country faces something of the same situation, the only difference being that today—thanks to the contribution of the Free Churches—this danger is confronted with a stronger religious influence than before. An influence that insists that even measures for security be taken in the light of the rights and value of the individual as a child of God, understanding that security is stronger as these rights and values are maintained. Freedom grew out of religious values and will be maintained only as the influence of free religion is strong. What this means, especially for the Congregational Churches, therefore, becomes abundantly clear.

VI

Fourth, but important as are these issues there is an even more fundamental one where the witness of the Congregational Church may prove to be even more significant. This has to do with the reuniting of Protestantism. I sometimes wonder if we Congregationalists realize how inevitably this is bound up with our fundamental commitment to the doctrine of the freedom of the Christian man.

Recognizing man's direct dependence upon God, it is inevitable that we hold in respect all those who profess and call themselves Christians. Here is a sure basis and probably the only sure basis of unity—respect for the dignity of every man, respect for the differences that will surely arise between equally sincere followers.

The only time that we have ever fallen into real trouble was when we forgot that the basis of our faith is respect for the dignity and worth of man as a child of God and were led to think of him as a worthless worm, the child of wrath. The Unitarian schism was not primarily theological—it was social. It revolted against an unworthy conception of man—read Emerson's Divinity School address and see how plainly this stands out. It became theological because of its social passion. But so long as Congregationalism holds to its fundamental doctrine of freedom, it occupies a central position in the movement for Christian unity.

If you will look up the records of the early National Councils, you will find that one of the strongest motives in creating a national organization was the belief that by so doing it would be easier to effect union with other bodies. Reunion thus is one of the major concerns of our national body. Since the creation of the national body eight series of conversations have been entered into, four of which have been consummated and one of which is still pending.

The most obvious disappointment was

the failure of our conversations with the Episcopalians, but out of this came one great gain—the conviction that the way of reunion lies with the free rather than the authoritarian churches. But there is increasing evidence that the pressure of the past war years will more and more bring the question of church union to the fore. The world will demand that which a divided church cannot give and in meeting this new day the witness of the free church holds a commanding and essential position.

To accomplish this Congregationalists will necessarily have to give up names and customs and practices which have been hallowed by long usage. Those with whom we join will have to do the same. This will be inevitable in any major union. But Congregationalism is a spirit much more than it is a form. That is why it has been possible to use the names Congregational and Free Churches almost interchangeably. The essential thing is the spirit, and unless new forms make impossible the expression of the free spirit, they are not to be feared.

In fact, one who really believes in the strength of the Congregational spirit will welcome the opportunity to take it into new relationships in order that its contribution to the world may be enlarged, and its full mission accomplished. It well may be that the greatest contribution of Congregationalism will be discovered in its ability to lead the way in healing the wounds of a divided Christendom.

When I Go Back to the Pastorate . . .

By Chaplain James M. Davis

WHEN Protestant Chaplains take time for a good old bull session, they usually end up with sentences that start: "When I go back, I am going to . . ." And then we spout. Our ideas are drawn directly from our army experiences and reflect our civilian

experiences. They are not profound theological ponderings, but rather practical thoughts about working techniques. In the hope of starting such a discussion in the pages of *THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY*, I offer a few of my own.

I am going to be available. I shudder

when I recall the outward appearance of busyness that I gave to my civilian congregation. I was always rushing. It must have taken more than average courage for one of my people to ask me to take an hour to listen. In the army I have seen the way men will pick just the right time and place to "open up." Any show of being too busy to listen frightens them away. So—I am going to set a time in the evening when my people can come to my study and find me free, receptive, and ready to listen. There will probably be grave temptations to let other engagements interfere with these evenings, and a great many hours spent in study instead of consultations. But I shall be as firm as a doctor about keeping these hours. Before many weeks my people will *know* that the pastor will be in his study each Monday, Wednesday and Friday from seven to eight.

I am going to be inaccessible before ten each morning. In my civilian parish I used to reach my office by nine. Soon the telephone would begin a barrage of interruptions. In the army I have reported for work at various times between seven and eight. I have found that the first two hours are the best for serious study. So I shall try to get to my study by eight each morning and put in two uninterrupted hours of serious study on connected topics. It will not be casual reading; but will be study. Soon my people may adjust their telephoning to this schedule.

I am going to lay more emphasis on the Bible. In the army it has been the only common ground upon which to approach men of widely varying backgrounds. In a church, every child should be required to know the Bible before being admitted to the church. The Biblical basis of each sermon should be announced to the people at least a month in advance so that they can make their own preparation. It may even be possible to correlate the church-school and sermon subjects with suggested daily family Bible readings. The Bible must be taught, but its

fundamental relevance to life must be shown. To this end drama, pageantry, slides, movies, pictures, music—every possible aid—must be used.

I am going to have an informal evening service. An evening service each Sunday can have a varied program of tremendous scope. It can include hymns and gospel songs which may not quite fit in the more formal morning service, but which the people love to sing. It can use all the techniques of presentation that can be devised: sermons, book reviews, drama, pageantry, special music, unusual worship forms, panels and open forums, town meetings, outside speakers, religious movies and slides—everything that an ingenious program-planning group can devise. There should be a suggestion box for questions and original ideas. Some way must be found to provide a program budget with which to pay incidental expenses. This service will definitely supplement the morning service by being different.

I am going to visit my men. It may be a brief chat or a half-day tour through a factory, but I am going to visit each man in his place of business or work at least once shortly after coming to a new pastorate. Recognizing that a man's work and his family are his primary interests, I will make certain that he knows I am interested in both. Perhaps in the men's organization of the church we can work out some statement of a code of work ethics. A man's religion should be vitally related to his work.

I am going to try to assist weaker churches. Small, pastorless churches can perhaps be helped to a position where they can afford to call a pastor. With the most tact of which I am capable, I shall offer my services in providing a dying church with regular worship. It may work out that I can conduct two Sunday afternoon services each month, together with one monthly or quarterly communion service, and find capable deacons or other laymen from my own church to conduct the other two or three services. My young

people can help in the church school and youth group. Helping such churches will certainly be difficult, but it seems to be at least one technique for arresting the decline of our smaller churches.

I am going to seek commitments for Christian service. Many young men and women do not consider the ministry, religious education or mission work because it is not put up to them. I shall select suitable young people and definitely seek to kindle their interest. The most effective technique I have yet discovered for doing

this is to see that they meet and know attractive, interesting, vital people who are already in Christian work.

It is easy to sit in a tent in China and write, "I am *going* to. . . ." It is not easy to accomplish such plans. Perhaps there are chaplains sitting in bamboo bashas in the Philippines, in battleship staterooms, amid European ruins, or even in stateside luxury who are thinking along these lines. I wonder what *they* are thinking. . . .

Reflections of a Minister's Wife

Mrs. Kenneth D. Beckwith

Beverly, Mass.

NO one put into my hand, when I, at a very young twenty-three, became a minister's fiancée, a little book telling me what was expected of a minister's wife. Otherwise I might have been very dubious about going ahead, or I might have been even happier than I already was. Probably it would all have depended upon who wrote the little book—and from what point of view and experience it was written. I suppose I have temerity even to try to put anything down on paper when I still have so much to learn, but even so I feel moved to do so.

Of all positions, it's about the most ambiguous. There are no rules or regulations. You don't want to take yourself too seriously, and then you find you have to. I have often felt that I would experience a certain release of mind and spirit if what was expected of me were a little bit more clear-cut and definite. Yet, on the other hand, one might feel hedged in and held down. I see that there are many reasons why the position must be recognized by those who hold it, and yet I think I believe more than ever that freedom of personality is involved to a great degree.

Wasn't it John Wesley who said to love God and do as you please, That's

both pretty general and quite thwarting, too, at times! But it has much truth in it. To maintain a certain integrity and to be a Christian in terms of one's own personality is of extreme importance. So many articles dealing with the life of a minister's wife bring up many true but quite superficial aspects of her days—"the Open Manse"—"Shall I hold Office?"—or "Parsonage Problems" are the kind of emphases given in most church publications. These are often most helpful, if only to make one feel she is not alone in many of her problems, but I have always looked for a booklet or an essay that would go deeper.

We like to think and evaluate the qualities that would be most helpful in a minister's wife. People say, "Is she a good hostess?"—"I hope she doesn't gossip?"—"Do you suppose she'd help in the choir or in the Sunday School?"—or wherever it is they need help most. All those things are important. I was nearly disqualified in our very first parish in a little country town because I had never canned tomatoes and wasn't even interested. (At least I've made progress along that line!) But these questions are not of first importance.

It seems to me now, after numbering among my friends many ministerial cou-

ples, that *identity of purpose* is a primary and surpassing need. I have never known happier marriages than I have seen evidenced in some of these people. And I have never seen lonelier men than those who were married to good housewives and good mixers but who had to walk alone down every other path.

A certain singleness of mind comes through a main purpose. A clarifying agent enters into your life and your work and your love when you share a great and a common loyalty. You are bound and you are free. You think of what your church expects of you and yet more fundamentally of what Christ expects you to give to people. More and more I think of the word "interpretation." In terms of our own personalities, in terms of any few gifts that we may have of music, or of mind, or of spirit, we can act as interpreters and, in a way, we *are* interpreters of what the Christian gospel means to us, whether we want to be or not. Does it sound as though the picture were overdrawn to say that men and women on all sides of us are hungry and untaught? That hidden in the hearts of most of the people we meet is an eagerness for God? I wish there were far more ways and opportunities than there are for serving interpretively in our churches, but along with our husbands we can, in quiet strength and inner happiness, seek to live out in our lives what it means to us to have fellowship with God. We can share in the creation of a Christian home. This is one form of interpretation. There are others, of course, some articulate and some of such an intangible nature that words can never compass them. But the effort to interpret must be both deliberate and spontaneous, both willed and striven for, and yet it also must be a very gift of grace.

As I read the above words over, they seem all too incomplete. When I hear of the engagement of a young minister or when a girl says to me, as one did last summer, "I plan to marry a minister when I grow up"—and I think she will!—my

heart suddenly feels very full. There is so much ahead that they don't know about. There are the dictatorial people, the too-sensitive people, the people who make you wonder how the church has ever survived down through the years. There are the little sacrifices of time and money and companionship that are episodes of every day. There is the sense of aloneness that comes at times. And then I realize what a superficial view this is. The man who says of a church, "They are calling me but not my wife," is not fundamentally voicing the truth. It is better for us if we felt called when we were chosen! And the more deeply we love, the more clearly we think, the more whole-heartedly we enter into the spirit of our husband's ministry, the less will the trivial vexations of our days bother us and the richer will be our sense of compensating joy. No one questions the fact that there are many very nominal Christians and a few rather difficult individuals in most of our churches. But as the years go on and our eyes become more open and our hearts more perceptive, we feel that we are surrounded on all sides by people of courage, people of faith, people who make all of life precious because of the loving understanding and generosity of their lives.

It seems to me increasingly true that our duties may not be defined but our allegiance is—that when life seems complex it can be simplified by conscious thought of Christ. No one can tell us just what to do, and we probably wouldn't like it if they did—but if we are eager and sensitive we feel an inner compulsion of spirit and follow that. Our husbands, as ministers of Christ, come first in the minds of the congregation, and we may not seem to count at all. That doesn't matter very much, or even mean we are not doing our work well, for in our hearts we know that we are sharing in his ministry to the degree that we give strength or courage or happiness to him. This is a unique privilege and joy, and as such we should take it in both hands with gratitude.

Some Observations on Seminary Curriculums

Frederick L. Fagley

AT the recent Round Table Discussion held in Boston (to be reported in next issue), one topic not on the agenda kept cropping up in every session—and that was the content of the Seminary Curriculum. It made little difference where the discussion began or what topic was assigned, sooner or later this uninvited guest was found seated at the head of the table. It is quite apparent that sooner or later this group will settle down to a full-dress debate on this topic. In the meantime, I think it will be helpful if pastors everywhere give the matter some attention. At least work around the topic that eventually we may have some common thought.

I wish it had been possible for every pastor in our fellowship to be at this Round Table. For three long sessions there was not a dull or idle moment. Abundant good fellowship was constantly in evidence, deep interest, utmost frankness. This was the first attempt, at least in our generation, to bring together the responsible leaders of seminaries training men for the ministry of our churches, and representative pastors and denominational workers. It was quite evident that this group has a work to do and that the members were, one and all, thoroughly agreed to give their best thought and the necessary time to the study of the various aspects of the Church-Seminary Relationship which its crucial importance deserves.

My intention in this brief statement is not to report any findings on this topic, the content of the Seminary Curriculum, for there were none; or to set forth the points brought up incidentally relating to this topic as other matters were being seriously discussed; but to share with you some thoughts that have come to the surface in my own mind at the meeting and since.

The seminary men were keenly alert on

the subject. Whenever the general discussion veered towards this quarter all of them had words on the tip of the tongue. They sincerely wanted to know what these workers in the churches think about present seminary courses of study, what sort of training the churches desire their young ministers to have, what subjects they believe are over-emphasized, what subjects neglected, etc., etc. At the same time every seminary man was just as alert to defend the seminaries' exclusive right to make each its own curriculum.

The attitudes of the fourteen non-seminary faculty members, who were laymen, pastors, state superintendents and denominational workers, showed considerable variety. These men evidently had not given this topic much thought. It was not on the agenda. They were busy men each in his own field, not closely related to the seminaries, and were somewhat taken by surprise by the constant reference to "the Curriculum." They soon manifested interest and finally became vocal, but withal in a most respectful manner. There was not the least indication of any desire on the part of these non-seminary men to limit in any way the seminary's complete freedom, and they seemed at a loss to understand why the seminary men were so sensitive on this point.

There is no question but that the seminaries want advice and suggestions. It was understood by all that the freedom which the seminaries have enjoyed for so long must be preserved. There must be no supervision by any one at any time. The relation of the seminary to the churches was described as somewhat similar to that of a doctor to his patients—that it is the doctor's responsibility to tell the patients what is for their good, but the doctor wants information that only the patients can give. The common thought was rather the mother-daughter simile. The churches established the seminaries for a specific

purpose and they are quite clear as to what this purpose was and is—Mother-church does not want to tell Daughter-seminary how to order her house, but the church is concerned that the seminary be strong in the faith and vigilant in the work of vital religion. To forward true religion the churches established, blessed and gave to the seminaries the same complete freedom which they themselves enjoy. The fact that the churches have not concerned themselves with the heavy problems of the seminaries to secure adequate financial help was mentioned as one feature of the Church-Seminary Relationship that deserves study and sympathetic understanding.

There is no doubt but that the content of the curriculum is the liveliest topic among seminary men, for the curriculum is a living, growing thing. Mark Van Doren has said, "The college is meaningless without a curriculum, but it is more so when it has one that is meaningless." The curriculum represents what the seminary considers is the best of the past, together with the best possible forecast of the needs of the future. As "the future becomes the present" changes must be made. The curriculum not only has to keep up with the times, but it has to be so far ahead of the times that it will meet the needs of men for the present and for even the years ahead. This is an almost impossible task. I am reminded of a certain western agricultural college which had some well-worked-out courses of instruction on the breeding, care and treatment of farm horses, when it suddenly became aware that farmers were beginning to buy tractors. In every generation men have said, "The problems I work with now were unknown in my college days." To plan how to meet these unforeseen future problems is one of the compelling tasks of curriculum makers. They must be realists as well as prophets. The curriculum makers always have to overcome the lag due to the teacher's familiarity with the problems he faced in his youth. In fact the teacher has to be a three-generation man:

he remembers his youthful problems; he works with his present problems and those of his students; and he tries to foresee and to prepare them for the problems they will face in their maturity. Times and conditions move so rapidly that it is well said by some sons to their fathers, "But you see, Dad, you and I are really two generations apart."

The seminaries want to know what conditions affect the religious life of the people today which men must be trained to meet, and also what are the trends in social and religious living and what may be prophesied as to the nature and content of the problems ministers must face in the days ahead. Here every pastor can do a good day's work by observing, considering, analyzing and informing the seminaries. The pastor is close to his people. He knows the problems his people now face and the sort of help they need. He also sees or ought to see what forces are converging in the thought life of his people, what spiritual combats lie ahead, and, long in advance, how the course should be charted. Every pastor should consider himself an advance scout, seeing and learning, and sending his reports to General Headquarters. These reports will be given the closest attention.

The curriculum of the seminary has grown greatly in this direction in this generation. Social studies of all sorts have been introduced and enlarged, and elective courses in nearby colleges and universities are enthusiastically recommended. In the field of religious education there has been also a rapid growth in the number and the range of studies provided by the seminary. So varied are the new courses in these fields that it is possible for the seminary student "to know a little about many things."

But the question arises—on what foundation of basic principles shall this varied range of "practical" studies rest? How can these foundation principles be interpreted by personal experience? For what one really knows about religion comes through his personal experience. His stud-

es but help him to understand his own experience and instruct him how he may share with others the insights, understandings and instructions which root back in his personal experience. How and where will this appear in the curriculum?

It is agreed that to have this crucial explanation of experience one must be at home with the great minds of the ages. The Bible, the Greek writings, the Fathers. Here one relives the life of mankind and makes his own the values of the stored riches accumulated through the centuries and of the experience and thought of the ages. The foundation studies in the history of religion, its ancient teachings, i.e., its theology set in its natural environment of world culture, are what make a seminary a school of religion. The "what" must have its proper relationship to the "how."

It is a truism that in shaping the curriculum it must be built on the understanding that this present and that future are one with the past. The curriculum must ever hold this thought uppermost. The church has its rich inheritance and it is high negligence, no less, to seek to solve today's problems without knowing how in other ages men have met and solved, or not solved, the problems of life. The problems of men's mental and spiritual living are constant, the peculiar conditions within which they arise are the new ingredients. But without knowledge of what men faced, what they thought, what they did about the identical central problem, one is handicapped immeasurably.

This means that the curriculum must reach back to the very beginnings, and cases and personalities become alive under the inspiring leadership of the teacher. The relationship of past events or ancient personages must be made real, as it has in very truth, because of the direct relativity to events and persons of today. The experience and the thoughts of the past are treasured and live because they are common to men living today.

The problem is to keep these three—

past, present and future—in balance. Here is a constant need, for the equilibrium is not fixed, and if the curriculum is alive it is bound to be just as fluid as is life itself.

The seminary must provide through its curriculum the opportunity for its well-trained and capable teachers to be interpreters of the past, counselors for the present and prophets of the future.

These are questions seminary men are trying to answer. The responsibility rests, under our democratic system of church organization, with the seminary and it is right and proper it should. But the church has an interest and is involved. The church, in the first place, furnishes the students, and has given them a certain preparation. Much could be said and some things must be said of the church's responsibility to furnish the seminary with students of first-rate ability, grounded in the principles of the church's teaching, experienced in the church's work, with lives changed and enriched by valid personal life of religion of experience. The churches must send up better men, better prepared. But to do this the churches must be informed of what the seminary plans to do to and for these men.

In the second place, the church receives back from the seminaries their finished product. The men who come down from the seminaries will determine in large measure what the churches of the future will be, and here the churches have a concern.

The facts that the churches have not felt responsibility for the financial support of the seminaries and that the seminaries have sought their own funds from private givers, and further that from the first seminaries training men for the Congregational ministry have been for the most part free and independent of denominational control, has lessened the contact from which both churches and seminaries have suffered. The Department of the Ministry hopes to strengthen greatly the ties of mutual interest which should characterize this relationship.

The Department of the Ministry Conducts a Significant Round Table

Clarence S. Dunham

Danbury, Conn.

What should be the relationship of the churches to the seminaries training men for the Congregational Christian ministry?

What should be done to provide a recognized leadership for the 2,917 Churches of our denomination with fewer than 100 members?

What is the responsibility of the home, the church, the denomination and the seminary in recruiting candidates for the ministry?

THESE were the significant questions discussed at the first Round Table Conference of the Department of the Ministry with officials of Seminaries training men for the Congregational Christian ministry. The Round Table was held at the Boston City Club, May 22-23, and was attended by members and officers of the Commission on the Ministry and the Department of the Ministry and by representatives of ten seminaries and colleges. So profitable was the discussion that the plans of Dr. F. L. Fagley, Director of the Department of the Ministry, for an annual Round Table of like nature were unanimously approved. There was general agreement that the churches and the seminaries need to get better acquainted. A succession of such Round Tables would provide a medium through which the churches could inform the seminaries of their needs in the training of their ministry and the seminaries in turn acquaint the churches with the problems and plans of theological institutions.

I

The discussion of the Church-seminary relationship was opened by Dr. Douglas

Horton, who asked that the seminaries develop and teach an adequate doctrine of the Church in which there would be a proper balance between freedom and fellowship and in which the ecumenicity of the Congregational principle would have full expression. He characterized theological training as being three-fold; Christian Psychology, the knowledge of self; Christian Theology, the knowledge of God and worship; and Christian Sociology, the knowledge of Christian social relationships and the Church. In this third area of teaching, he believes our modern seminaries are failing and suggests that they must aim to give ministerial candidates a sense of belonging, a sense of community, in the institution of the Church.

Other suggestions of what the church asks of the seminary were: (a) Ministers must be so trained that they will keep their intellectual curiosity and a lively mind throughout their period of service. (b) Ministers must be given a wider practical training so they can meet the needs of various types of church situations. (c) A program for the continued personal devotional life of the minister ought to be developed while he is in the seminary. (d) Seminaries need to know the pulse of the local churches and must not isolate themselves or feel independent of the churches.

In stating the seminaries' position here it was pointed out by faculty representatives that: (a) Churches often do not know what they want in the way of training for their ministers or do not want adequately trained men and hence are in no position to tell the seminaries what their curricula should be. (b) The seminaries are not isolated from the churches but maintain Field Work Departments

and are constantly aware of the problems which their students meet in administering their parishes. (c) The recruits for the ministry sent to the seminaries by the churches are frequently not high-quality men. There ought to be a screening out process in college so that only the best men come to seminary. (d) The seminaries are faced with the problem of trying to train men for two essentially different professions, theological scholarship and the vocation of the practical ministry. (e) The seminaries need help from the churches in recruiting candidates for the ministry, in providing field work for ministers in training and in placing men when they have finished their training. (f) The seminaries desire to know the wishes of the churches and their needs but do not feel that legislation or undue pressure should be brought to bear upon them in the formulation of curricula. (g) The seminary course cannot be long enough to provide complete and adequate training.

The discussion made it clear that just as ministers and churches are not always certain of what they want the seminaries to provide in the way of ministerial training, so the seminaries are not in agreement in the method of giving that training in the most adequate way. Some schools take the position that the cultural side of theological education should be stressed and that any competent man can solve the practical problems of the ministry if he is well grounded in the body of pure theological knowledge. Other schools stress the practical areas of theological training and feel that the average person in the field has little opportunity to use theological scholarship. It was suggested that this difference in emphasis involves a false dichotomy and that both areas of training must be given their proper place in every curriculum.

Because there was no finality in the answers given, this section of the Round Table discussion closed on a note of humility as both churches and seminaries realized that they still faced the basic

question, "Is the ministry really a profession and can we develop men technically competent to do the minister's job?"

II

The second session of the Round Table discussion concerned the small churches of our denomination and the providing of an adequate leadership for them. The problems of these churches are so great and their resources so small that the temptation is to let them die. It was pointed out, however, that there are many values in these churches that need to be conserved. Frequently these small congregations are feeders of the large city churches. Some of them are in growing population areas and will eventually develop into strong churches. Many will always remain missionary or aided churches. These fields must be considered on an individual basis and not as a blanket problem.

The difficulties to be overcome among the small churches have to do first of all with adequate financial support of the minister. Men do not enter the ministry primarily for financial return but do need a living wage. Then many of these small fields seem unattractive and do not appear to offer a challenge to competent leadership. The churches themselves frequently do not seem to know what they want or what their job in the community is. Finally, many competitive situations have arisen in small communities because of the improvements in modern transportation.

Some of the suggested solutions of the problem were: (a) Yoked fields and larger parishes, sometimes interdenominational larger parishes, with dual ordination if necessary. (b) Are consolidated churches possible like consolidated schools or are there particular values of Christian fellowship in the local community that are lost in such a plan? (c) City churches can nurture small churches near them or large churches can father small churches. (d) Theological seminaries can use nearby

small fields for field work training of students. (e) The New Hampshire plan of a Conference minister who will stay on a rural field until it becomes self supporting and then move on to a new field was commended. (f) A lay leadership, or an "inferior" clergy for small churches might be developed with Summer Conferences or seminaries providing limited training for such men. (g) Audio aids and television may eventually change the whole problem of small churches. (h) Part-time ministers who supplement their incomes with secular work could be used. (i) Seminary graduates might give their first two or three years out of school to the Board of Home Missions on a contractual basis and serve small fields under Board supervision.

Both the seminaries and the denomination are aware of the needs in the area of the small church field and are seeking to deal with the problem, the seminary by training men more adequately for work in such fields, the denomination by giving study and leadership. A new realism in facing this whole issue is manifest throughout the denomination and the seminaries.

III

The final session of the Round Table explored the field of recruiting for the ministry and sought to place responsibility on the various agencies involved.

There was general agreement that the minister is the chief recruiter and the "key man" in the picture. He must be a man of integrity and courage, respected in the community, if he is to attract young people to his calling. Since the emotional element plays so large a part in the inner compulsion to the ministerial calling, the minister must deepen the spiritual life of the church and his people. Our clergy have failed here and have stressed the intellectual and rational side of religion to too large a degree. Certain of our ministers have become primary recruiters. They are honest, courageous, outspoken men who search out and cultivate the

finest boys in their congregations and encourage them to serve the church. All of our ministers must give themselves more largely to this interest if Congregationalism is to begin reproducing its own ministry.

The denomination is coming alive to its duty in the field of recruiting. The formation of the Department of the Ministry and its work is the most significant emphasis in our church today. The Commission on Evangelism and Devotional Life, in deepening the spiritual life of the churches, will render vast aid. Anything the denomination can do to add to the financial security and dignity of the ministry will help. Ralph Hyslop and Oliver Powell are giving major attention to recruiting in the colleges and Young People's Summer Conferences. Through the efforts of the Department of the Ministry the State Superintendents of the Conferences west of the Mississippi have appointed a minister in each conference who will be responsible for recruiting. These men will acquaint themselves with the needs and will visit Young People's Conferences, Association meetings and churches along with the superintendent and present the challenge of Christian life service. The men in the armed forces who desire to train for the ministry after their discharge are being cultivated. They will be placed in care of their Associations or of their ministers and will be counseled and guided through their period of preparation. A national personnel officer who will keep the records of these men and other future candidates for the ministry may be appointed.

The seminaries do not appear to have a large responsibility for recruiting. Their field is training the candidates who come to them. Nevertheless, through their alumni and through their faculties in public contacts the seminaries do exert an influence.

Congregational homes may provide ministerial recruits through formal request that some of their children go into Christian work but it is by unconscious

influence that the best work can be done. If the home is basically un-Christian or has an attitude of contempt for the ministry, its youth will choose other fields of endeavor. Young women whom ministers may marry as well as parents are influential here. If the ministry is honored and respected as a profession by such lay people young men are more apt to enter it as a life calling.

The local church is a key point in recruiting. There are churches that are habitual abusers of their minister. They do not give him adequate financial support nor do they accord him a standing in the community worthy of his calling. Such churches will produce few candidates for the ministry. A church that honors its minister and gives him worthy standing and loyalty will create an atmo-

sphere and soil in which prospective ministers will grow.

The Round Table session on recruiting closed on a note of hope that all the agencies of the church would renew their efforts and interest in this most vital problem to the end that an adequate ministry will be provided for our churches in the future. It was the general opinion that nothing more important than the work of the Department of the Ministry is being done in the denomination today. Our church will succeed or fail on the basis of its leadership. We need to plot a complete system of education for our ministry that will not end with theological school but with retirement. The ultimate solution of the issue demands further co-operation between the churches and the seminaries.

William L. Sullivan— Great Christian Soul

By John Clarence Petrie

DR. SULLIVAN, the former Paulist Father who spent the last twenty years of his life in the Unitarian ministry, belonged very definitely to that diminishing band of Unitarians who look upon themselves as members of the world-wide church of Jesus Christ. In leaving the Roman Catholic church and its priesthood it was no thought that he was abandoning Christ. He was wearied with the artificiality—as we saw it—of Catholic Christology. He could not force himself to believe that the unborn infant in the womb of Mary was the Absolute holding the universe in control. But that did not mean that he could have any traffic with the negative rationalism which classed Jesus as simply a good man; although he was very close to it in his first days of rebellion. That was when he wrote a little text called,

“From the Gospel to the Creeds” (Beacon Press). He wrote me in 1928, when I asked him if he had not advanced beyond that book, “Yes. I have changed my Christology since ‘From the Gospel to the Creeds.’ The ‘good man’ theory—the ‘spiritual genius’ theory, are inadequate now. Utterly and radically Providential is how Jesus appears to me—the one predestined Soul for teaching us the cycle of truths which eternalize man—such as, self surrender to the Supreme Will, the non-sufficingness of everything temporal, the glory of a Perfection that may be won, the formidableness of a Perfection that may be lost—and the Baptism that he was baptized with, sacrifice and the Cross.

“Those things are not earthly wisdom; they are not deductions from racial experience; they, when lived as he lived

them, are revelations. Jesus as revealer of Spirit, divine spirit as well as human, is the real Jesus. He is not the pale theoretician that Liberalism makes him. No one can utter the final Authority without himself being an authority. And such Jesus is—not therefore to be patronized as one very like ourselves, but followed faithfully and humbly as one very like God.

"A Jesus who was a Jewish Charles W. Eliot or a Palestinian W. E. Channing makes me seasick. It is infantile. But a mystery as deep as all the oceans, and an authority as compelling as the hands that hold the constellations, this sort of Jesus stands before us when skeptical criticism has done its utmost, as the only explanation of the history that began with him and proceeds from him."

Was not this confession of faith enough to give Sullivan a place in any Protestant church? Well, hardly. With some churches this would be a deficient creed since they will have nothing short of a complete equation of Jesus with the godhead. Furthermore, some denominations require a literalistic acceptance of the Bible which Sullivan abandoned when he left Catholicism. He went on in the same letter here quoted to say, "But one thing I cannot do. I cannot make the same surrender to his four biographers as I wish to make to him. I don't know whether there was a virgin birth. What I do know is that he never spoke of it or required any profession of it. The virgin birth I doubt. His supremacy I cannot doubt. And I believe that his unearthly authority will be best recognized when all these temporal and local and physiological accidents will not be allowed to torment the soul that seeks him."

That such a position was compatible with the free theological tradition of the Congregationalists goes without saying. But the matter need not be left to conjecture. He came to be more and more in demand in his last years among liberal Protestant groups outside his own fellowship. Thus he wrote me in March, 1932:

"During the week before Holy Week I was giving six lectures to the faculty and 150 students of a Baptist theological school in Newton (Newton-Andover), and in Holy Week was at King's Chapel. . . . As for those Baptists, upon my word it was a love feast. Never have I known such flavor of friendliness. And being an excommunicate among the gang of Unitarian preachers, I enjoyed it all the more. It was the finest experience in many a year."

Dr. Van Schaick, editor of the *Christian Leader* (Universalist), carried an account of Sullivan's lectures at that time and the memory of his description clings with me to this day. He heard Sullivan talking about worship and said that the students sat on the edge of their chairs as Sullivan with unmatched eloquence spoke against eloquence!

One of the last assignments before his death in 1935 was to give a retreat to Congregational clergymen in New England. It is my impression he had to give it up.

Sullivan was somewhat mistaken about his position among his Unitarian clerical brethren. With the left-wing Humanists he was truly an excommunicate and with good reason. When Unitarian Christians "soft-pedaled the growth of atheistic Humanism in their church he spoke out boldly. He was no appeaser. And when the Humanists were threatening secession he thought it would be a good thing for all concerned. But there was a considerable group of the clergy who admired and loved him. At a retreat at the Isles of Shoals which I attended the last day turned into a testimonial meeting more like old-fashioned Methodism than the coldly aloof Unitarianism of tradition. This was all the more remarkable since it was started not by a come-outer with a background in "enthusiasm" but by Dr. Walter R. Hunt, born and bred into New England Unitarianism. Some of the ministers were so moved that their voices shook as they testified to what Sullivan had done during those days to awaken

faith and spiritual action within their souls. One man said, "I want to say that I have given my last pulpit lecture. I am returning to my church to PREACH from now on!"

As for the Unitarian laity, they hung upon his words. He conducted chapel services one summer at the Isles of Shoals and I saw people emerging from them with their eyes brimming with tears. And after his talk on "Jesus and Pilate" I heard old Thomas Elliot, who was looked upon as the father of the Shoals conferences, exclaim as the tears ran down his face, "It was the most moving thing I ever heard." And his parishes adored him. His last charge, the Unitarian Church of Germantown, Pa., perhaps holds him more in its heart than any other. It was there he died. It was its present minister, Max Daskam, who edited the autobiography, "Under Orders," now being widely read. And what he preached to them may be judged from this para-

graph from a letter he wrote me in 1931: "I told my people a week ago that tags and denominational placards were doomed. I told them I regretted our own placard, and bade them think over the larger cause which overtops any lesser artifice. I am hoping to get here a thoroughly Christian church, and am hammering home the supremacy of Christ's religion and Christ's person."

How Congregational Christians with their passion for ecumenicity must warm to those words! He has been gone now for nearly ten years. Many of the younger Unitarian ministers do not know of him. The pamphlets he wrote for the denomination are out of print—and out of favor with the denominational trends. But some of these newer men are learning of the quality of his mind and soul through his autobiography and are taking courage for the battle to save Unitarianism for Christianity.

Concerning a Preacher's Self-Respect

THE title is wrong to begin with. It should be: "a preacher's self-respect for his vocation," which is not much better. "Self-respect in his calling" is nearer the mark and "respect for his calling" would be better still. But in a vocation where the calling and the called are both tied up in one bundle of personality as they are in the Protestant ministry, the ways in which a minister thinks of his ministry and thinks of himself in exercising it cannot easily be disentangled. The Latin Catholic Church does maintain a definite distinction between the priesthood and the priest. Being sacerdotally ordained, what he does as a priest does not depend for its efficacy upon what he personally is or is not. The sacraments he administers are always valid. Still one may venture to suppose, his feeling for

his vocation affects in almost indefinable ways his ministrations at the altar.

For no one can escape that fusion of self and service in any calling; a doctor who does not feel that just being a doctor is about the finest thing in the world is not likely to be a good doctor, and so with lawyers and merchants and the butcher and baker and candlestick maker. There is an unescapable interpenetration of one's conception of the worth of what he is doing and his self-respect in doing it, which is the secret of both his contentment and his power. A vast deal of social and economic worthlessness must be due to the fact that people do not care for what they are doing because they see no meanings in it and have, therefore, no steadying and inspiring sense of being "called" themselves.

The Protestant ministry is vitally vulnerable in just these regions. The Protestant minister, at least in our tradition, cannot share and probably does not understand the priests' persuasion of an office validated by an enabling ordination. The efficacy of what he does depends so much upon how he feels about it. St. Paul, according to Moffatt, had a finer phrase—"the spiritual glow." That, he said, was the secret of being a good Christian—no easy matter in Rome two thousand years ago. It is the secret of being a good minister in our kind of ministry today and it is still not easy. Preaching, particularly, depends so much upon "the spiritual glow." No book in homiletics can define it, but the congregation knows, without knowing why or how, whether it lights a sermon or not. That glow gleams from deep and constant fires.

Just now so many influences conspire to bank that fire; a certain writing down of the value of preaching at all for one thing. Preaching and worship, we are being told, are rivals in the House of God and preaching must take second place for many reasons. Worship-centered churches are making a better statistical showing. Preaching divides a Sunday service between the preacher in the pulpit and the congregation in the pews, while worship is unifying and cooperative. Preaching, they say, is too straitened a foundation upon which to build. Worship is older than preaching and furnishes more spacious foundations. The great liturgies are the bequest of questing generations, expressing timeless needs, hallowed by experience, enriched by art, perfected in phrasing and playing upon all the chords of the soul—qualities which do not always characterize preaching, and so on and on.

All this is true enough, but it is not a question of "either or"; on the contrary of "both and." Either servant of religion would be wanting in the blessed grace of humility if it sought an undisputed primacy. Worship and preaching have come

down the Christian centuries together. Each loses if it too much outdistances the other. Those who stress the primacy of worship have allies whose assistance they probably do not relish. The very word "preaching" has unpleasant overtones, as, for example, "giving obtrusive advice." In general, secular literature has not been kind to preachers and preaching, especially the non-liturgical. A frock coat and a white tie lend themselves to caricature. The movies want more colorful vestments than even a Geneva-gown and are kinder to the parish priest than the Protestant preacher. He—the priest—seems to be going the more popular way.

The preacher himself who knows only too well the earthiness of his earthen vessel and the way the highest things get worn by use and wont, may come to say, "the things which I have seen I now can see no more." Something priceless has gone when a vision splendid "has faded into the light of common day." So much the more need then that a preacher must not lose respect for his vocation as a preacher, nor let others dissuade him of its sovereignty. He is still the master and the servant of the spoken word and, considering the power of the spoken words and how they begin and end all human affairs, being the cradle song and requiem of life, that is office enough for any man to fill—if he can.

The *Atlantic Monthly* has been publishing some articles in substance about our radio commentators and who's who in that field, and how trustworthy they are and their influence upon American public opinion, and what to do about them beside shutting off the radio. But his title is the thing: "Hearing Is Believing." The articles do not indicate familiarity with St. Paul's letters, but he said it first. People, he said in substance, could not believe in the Gospel unless they heard it. "And how," Moffatt translates him, "are they ever to hear without a preacher?" Which seems about all the argument any minister needs to lead him not only to

respect his vocation but give everything he has to it.

Every pulpit is or should be a broadcasting station for the most important news in the world: not that a hostile navy has been sunk or a capital city reduced to ashes by a cosmic bomb, but that there is a better way of human relationship divinely validated; that there is a promised order of good-will and justice and that there are plain rules for establishing it, laid down by a Master teacher whose wisdom was Divine and whose sacrificial love was and is redemption. Everybody needs to hear such good news and to believe—almost desperately. Few, if any of the voices which solicit our hearing, between intervals of advertising, are saying anything like that—on the contrary.

The traditions of preaching which most of the readers of this periodical (if and as they inherit have, since the turn of the century, passed through various phases. The Congregational Christian "way" has always stressed preaching for reasons needing no elaboration here. It has always been, at its best, pioneer preaching. It has reflected, that is, the free enquiring movements of the Christian mind in America. The history of Christian thought in America could be recorded from the preaching in our pulpits—in all its phases. Preaching became therefore—and still is—too largely an end in itself. Our great preachers made an art of it, being themselves unusually gifted, and any editorial pen would love to linger in reminiscence of that golden age, when the congregation waited for the sermons whose time limits were spacious, whose phrasing was so fine that some of them became literature. Much has since conspired to change that idyllic situation. Preaching has not only begun to lose primacy, but it has as a whole lost unity of purpose and message as any study of contemporaneous preaching reveals. Something of this, one may suspect, comes of making the sermon an end in itself instead of a creative instrument.

Preaching is really to set something down—not always deeds or programmes, but primarily forces and qualities of the soul which may themselves become deeds and programmes. Jesus began in that region—all he said was perfectly said and its perfection was rooted in its purpose so to change and redeem persons that their world would through them be changed and redeemed.

This too general and elusive phrase "creative preaching" opens vast and various vistas. For one must consider what creates it and what it tends to create and how. But it does steady a preacher and furnish a kind of keystone for all he seeks to do and a quiet, unfailing test and challenge to every faculty he possesses and a sustaining sense of mission. Under its compulsion and inspiration preaching is at once emancipated and subdued. It has almost frontierless regions in which to freely choose and move, but its control is in its gospel and its power in what it does. St. Paul used once a single sentence over which his translators labored. It might be translated: "I am out to get what to begin with has got me."

Preaching is like that. Every sermon should have behind it a compulsion of vision or conviction or sense of urgent need, which has already captured the preacher, some travail of the Gospel in the preacher's mind and spirit, to which from Sunday to Sunday he gives articulate form. When he considers that this trust and power are peculiar to the Christian ministry and measures humbly the distance between what he is charged to say and what is by others being so vociferously said, and the supreme significance of what he has to say, he will confess his inadequacies, but he will know that even a low pulpit is the highest place in which any man can be called to stand.

We were having a just-before-Thanksgiving prayer meeting in Burlington once and listing our blessings in testimony. (There was much then for which to be

thankful.) One of the minor saints took her turn with a quavering voice: "I made some jelly this Fall—and thank God it jelled." This composition does not seem, upon re-reading, to have "jelled." Perhaps it has not cooked long enough. It seems only to have elaborated the obvious. But that obvious is significant. (Henry Churchill King once noted the cost of ignoring the commonplace.)

Many things do combine to dim for the Protestant ministry the glory (St. Paul was not afraid of that word) of their calling, to doubt the worth of preaching, to seek possible substitutes and so to lose "the spiritual glow." There are many corrections, but a sure sense of the significance of the vocation and the travail of a time which can unleash little, elemental atomic forces, but cannot order its

own spirit, lend timeless meaning to the Gospel and invests its proclamation with unbelievable urgencies.

In our northern world the golden-rod in the worn pastures, the slowly shortening days, a certain quality of sunlight and evenings no longer warm enough to "sit out" witness to the too soon ending of a summer which somehow has missed ever quite being summer. This issue of *THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY* will be waiting for its readers as they return to begin another church year. Its various contents, the editor hopes, are worth the reading. It has no purpose save to serve our shared tasks and to maintain that the minister who goes up his pulpit stairs this autumn ascends to the most significant station in this world.

Pastoral Epistles

I. Concerning "A Minister of the Gospel"

To my Brethren in the Ministry—
Greetings:

Here begins a series of letters to you. This is made possible through the courtesy of the Editor of the *QUARTERLY*, who has placed this space at my disposal. Ever since I entered upon my present work as Secretary of the Board of Pastoral Supply in Boston it has been my desire to be, as it were, a pastor of pastors. I hope it will not seem presumptuous, then, if I call these communications *Pastoral Epistles*.

Recently a fine layman, chairman of a pastoral committee for one of our churches, was in our office. "We are looking," said he, "for a young man who will preach the gospel to us." This statement, I find, reflects a widespread desire by the people of our churches, as I have come into contact with them.

Shortly afterwards, when I was invited to preach the Ordination Sermon for one of my young friends, taking for its theme "A Minister of the Gospel," I called attention to the fact that this is the official designation for one of our fellowship. In signing marriage license returns, a minister in our State is required to indicate the branch of the Church that he represents. If he is of the Catholic Church he is to sign as "Priest," if of the Episcopal Church, as "Clergyman," but if he is of the Congregational order, he is required to sign as "Minister of the Gospel."

We owe our name to the Apostle Paul, who in Colossians 1:25 writes, "The Gospel . . . whereunto I am made a minister." The title is descriptive of our Congregational ideal and tradition. We are not hired men but fellow servants with our people. We are not bosses or ecclesiastical dictators. We are called to

ministers of the Gospel of Christ; like him, we go not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

There is a question that I frequently ask the Candidate at Ordination Council examinations. It goes something like this, "You are seeking Ordination as a minister of the Gospel. The Gospel is good news. What is the good news which you have to tell your people?"

I have never yet found a candidate who did not seem to be at a loss to give a satisfactory answer to my question. In many instances the question seemed never to have occurred to the candidate before. He had spent from three to seven years preparing for his profession and yet he was at a loss to define that of which he was about to be made a minister!

I suspect that their difficulty in phrasing an answer to my question may have been found in what the word "Gospel" meant to these young men. Perhaps it was associated in their minds with the old-time preaching of Billy Sunday days, which education and training had led them to discard. More likely it reminded them of what they had been told concerning the demand of certain laymen that their ministers shall "stick to the simple Gospel"; this is generally interpreted by the minister to mean that he confine his remarks to the life to come, steering clear of references to the life that now is, and when he does refer to the latter, using obvious platitudes that will not trouble the consciences of his hearers, or disturb them in their comfortable complacencies, and their cherished prejudices. Having these implications of the meaning of the Gospel in mind it was natural for the candidates to suspect a trap in my question, and so avoid committing themselves.

Now, of course, such a Gospel was not the one whereunto they were about to be made ministers. Nor was it the one which my friend, the chairman, had in mind when he said the committee wanted a young man who would preach the Gospel to them. From my observation I would

say that there are far fewer laymen who demand the "simple Gospel" as it has just been defined than one might think from listening to the remarks of some ministers. The great majority of our laymen come to church to get something from the service of worship and the sermon that will enable them the better to do their daily work, to solve their problems, to hold to their ideals and to keep their faith in themselves, their fellowmen and their God. This is what they really mean when they say that they want to hear the Gospel. The Gospel is good news—fresh news—not stale or bad news. It is a message of courage and hope of forgiveness and redemption for men and women who find themselves fearful and doubtful, baffled and beset in this age of change and revolution. It is the good news that "the sure foundation laid by God remains," that the moral order is unchanged and eternal in spite of totalitarian ideologies, and tyrannical dictators who may flaunt it. It is good news that,

"Behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above his own."

It is good news that the will of God is good will, not ill. It is good news that the Kingdom of God is a present reality, rather than some distant Utopia, toward which humanity is moving with painful steps and slow. That through the way and the truth and the life revealed in Christ men discover the Kingdom, and entering into it find pardon, peace and power, and gain that which will enable them to stand anything that the universe can do to them. It is good news that the redemptive purpose and plan of God is still in operation, that God in Christ is still reconciling the world unto Himself. It is good news that in suffering and sorrow and in self-forgetting service the Cross of Christ becomes the symbol of redemption and victory. It is good news that enduring peace in the world can and

will be achieved only among men of good will; and that this is the hour of the church's great and glorious opportunity. It is good news that Christ, by his triumph over death, has brought life and immortality to light, giving us the faith which overcomes the world.

We are made ministers of the Gospel to preach these eternal truths to men. The pulpit with its open Bible proclaiming the living word of truth is the symbol of our calling. Not alone to preach the Gospel are we made ministers, but to apply it. We are to do this not by scolding men, or passing judgment upon them, but by reasoning with them, and persuading them to apply it to themselves in all the

areas of their personal and social living; putting it into practice in all their words, and acts and attitudes.

Finally we are made ministers of the Gospel, not only to preach it and to apply it, but most of all to demonstrate it in our own lives and conduct. We are to speak the authentic word, and to give the convincing demonstration. So shall we be good and faithful ministers of the Gospel, worthy of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Faithfully yours in the Ministry of the Gospel

HORACE F. HOLTON

14 Beacon Street
Boston, Mass.

The Need for Study Groups

The Rev. Malcolm Vernon White

Minister, Kensington, Connecticut

MY first pastorate was in northern Georgia where I served four widely scattered country churches—one for each Sunday in the month. On fifth Sundays I had a vacation, theoretically. One Saturday a funeral director telephoned me that one of my parishoners had died, and funeral services were to be held in the church Sunday morning. Would I come? I would have to forego my regular monthly appointment to conduct a funeral at another of my churches. I wasn't sure that that was fair to the church I was expected to serve that Sunday. Seeking the advice of an experienced minister I learned that funerals come first, and everyone will understand. It so happened that before conducting this funeral service—my first—I had actually attended only two funerals in my life. I had two ministers' manuals, but what forms should I follow, and what selections would be appropriate? Fortunately, again, a local lay preacher was at hand to give guidance.

This is perhaps an extreme example, but it does illustrate how completely unprepared many of us younger ministers are to face the practical problems of our

ministry. Communion services? Pastoral calling? Funerals? Church organization? All of these bring a rush of practical problems for which we have no rule-book answers. Practices vary greatly, and there is always a wide latitude of choice. And when it comes to church symbolism we are on the open battlefield. I am not offering up a cry for a rigid orthodoxy or set forms, but I do feel that there is much guidance that can be given.

For the theological student I see great value in a year's apprenticeship under an experienced minister. This should come in the middle of his seminary training, and help him make his final year more profitable. The mature minister, always at hand, could help answer the thousand questions that come to the new minister for answer. I began my ministry with two bad blunders in the handling of "leading members." An apprenticeship could help a young minister gain self-confidence, and know many simple little things which a seminary could not possibly include in its curriculum. This year's apprenticeship might show that a man was obviously not suited for the ministry. By eliminating

ch a man from the Christian ministry, with the man and the church would profit. I can see three valuable features in visiting group studies for ministers:

1. An opportunity to become acquainted. We have always welcomed real opportunities to know my neighboring brethren in the ministry, and enjoy the richness of fellowship with them. Many common problems and interests inevitably arise. For a minister coming from another section of the country, it would be a valuable opportunity to know just what is expected of him, what have been the traditions, what is approved and what is frowned upon. We need not all be conformists, but we should know where we are when we start overturning the applecart.

2. An opportunity to study practices and procedures. A careful study of the best forms to use in marriage, baptism, visitation, funerals; what is and what

should be done in the pastoral call; the organizational structure of the church. Changes are always being made in our forms—some are good, and some are not so good. Are we going to depend mainly on episcopal forms, or should we make a radical departure? As a minister there are many such things I want to discuss in detail with my brethren, and with recognized leaders.

3. An opportunity to become acquainted with new forms. Every minister has a specialty. Many of our brethren have new ways of doing old things which are remarkably successful, and we should have an opportunity to know about them. One of the chief blessings of our Congregational freedom is that we are free to make improvements at any time we so desire. The creative talents of our ministry are given a change, and often the result is so good that the more orthodox denominations soon follow our lead.

The Soul Doctor

W. Edgar Gregory

Chaplain, U. S. Army; Corte Madera, California

THERE is an ancient art known as "the cure of souls" which appears to be having a rebirth in the mid-twentieth century. It was the art of helping sin-sick souls into salvation as practiced by discriminating members of the clergy. (Is it possible that the French word "cure" for a pastor derives from this art? Or the English title "curate"?) Originally the cure of souls was a relatively simple—albeit long-drawn-out and agonizing—process. One needed only to bring the sick soul into the presence of God the Maker for the cure to be accomplished. Of course, the ways were many and various by which this was to be done, but the eyes of the soul-doctor the goal was always clearly in mind. The sinner had first to be confronted with his sin—made fully aware of its nature and consequences. Then he had to be led to re-

pentance for these sins. Having repented he must somehow be shown that he was again at peace with God and his sins forgiven. He should now go forth a cured soul to sin no more.

And then, for many years, and apparently for no good reason, the Church almost forgot about "the cure of souls." Beginning with Horace Bushnell and his *Christian Nurture* good Christians tended to think mainly of the *growth* of Christian personality and preferred to forget that there were such things as "sin-sick souls" or even sick souls. If there were such things they were better left to the legerdemain of the "alienists" or "mind doctors." Decent citizens didn't want to be reminded that there was sin or distorted spirits.

We even reached the point where most of us believed that all illness—including

all kinds of insanity—could be traced to some organic source. Insanity was either the result of a brain injury from an accident or the deterioration of the nerve cells as the result of some infection—as syphilis.

Consequently there was no place for the soul doctor. Ordinary medicine should be able to deal with all of these “illnesses.” True, the organic origins were often quite obscure and medical science stymied in its efforts to obtain a cure, but in time all of these problems would be cleared. Religion was relegated to a nebulous area of “the unknown”—a solace for old ladies and weak characters who needed something on which to lean.

Over the past generation, however, we have gradually come to the realization that all personality defects are not organic in origin. The records are now almost overwhelming in their evidence that many of these “illnesses” are “functional.” To put it more simply, we have found that the organism itself is sound, but that it functions poorly because of some social, mental, or spiritual failure.

What is more important, we have come to the realization that many of these maladjustments are beyond the aid of the medical or social worker. The ministry itself must be consulted. This entails something more than that despairing cry of the psychiatrist who said, “Would that I knew the religious language as the minister! I would then be able to help many of my patients who now do not understand me.” It is something more than “talking religious language.” It is the *necessity* for religious authority. Religious authority speaks not only by virtue of its ecclesiastical position (*ex cathedra*, as the Roman Catholics would have it) but through experience. The soul doctor occupies his position not only because he

is ordained but because he has an understanding of man and his necessity for establishing a friendly relationship with God.

For just here is the essence of the role of the soul doctor. Man is lost not only (or even primarily) because he is at cross purposes with himself but because he is at cross purposes with the universe. He has to somehow reconcile himself with forces whose goal differs radically from his own, and yet to learn to feel he “belongs.” It is a goal that can be realized only with the guidance of a *spiritually* experienced man.

To be sure, there are many places along the way where the psychiatrist—and even the ordinary M.D.—can render primary aid. There is no use attempting the cure of a “sin-sick soul” who is suffering a physical or mental ailment which can be cured by orthodox medical care. Such an ailment is but an additional handicap to be overcome in helping a child of God to his spiritual home.

And such aids must not be sneered at as being less than “spiritual”! Anything which contributes to the presentation of a living spirit to its Maker as free from blemishes as possible is to be welcomed.

The soul doctor, therefore, must be a man who not only knows souls and their needs, but must understand something of the limitations of the machinery through which the soul manifests itself. He must be able to cooperate with those whose main function is the repair of the machinery. Together—the doctor and the minister—can accomplish much toward the presentation of an efficient and peaceful soul to its maker, toward the establishing of fellowship between the individual and that which is beyond his control.